

CITY OF MIAMI BEACH
Office of the City Manager
Letter to Commission No. 218-2004



To: Mayor David Dermer
and Members of the City Commisison

Date: August 13, 2004

From: Jorge M. Gonzalez
City Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jorge M. Gonzalez".

Subject: **TRAFFIC CALMING -- THE MERIDIAN CONDOMINIUM AND BAYSHORE NEIGHBORHOOD**

This LTC is in response to an e-mail received by Commissioner Gross regarding traffic concerns associated with the Meridian Condominium and the Bayshore Neighborhood. The e-mail and his proposal are attached.

The attached proposal from Mr. Lenart appears to be site specific to The Meridian condominiums that are currently under construction. The sketch appears to direct all traffic coming out of the condominium project south towards Dade Boulevard, thereby preventing residents and visitors from The Meridian from making a northbound movement on Meridian. This would mean that the residents and property owners who live in The Meridian would have to go south on Meridian and then either west or east on Dade to Alton Road or Prairie Avenue in order to go north. A review of the DRB approved site plan indicates that Mr. Lenart is correct in that the current development order does not include this "lock" to restrict northbound travel to these residents.

The currently planned ingress/egress to the condominium parking garage intersects Meridian at a 90° angle, which would allow both southbound and northbound movements on Meridian for the condominium residents. A review of the situation is being undertaken by the Public Works Department and the developer has been requested to perform a traffic study to ensure that the development provides adequate mitigation for the expected new trips generated (this was required in the DRB Final Order). This may include some improvements to Meridian, depending on what the study shows.

As this appears to be a site specific "developer" issue, it is not something with which the CIP Office is directly involved. Specific improvements that so directly affect a specific property are not likely to be included in the Neighborhood Improvements Program. Site specific issues are more appropriately handled through the development process discussed above.

The general traffic study issue has a history in the sense that during the Bayshore Neighborhood BODR process there were a contingent of residents that continually insisted that a neighborhood-wide traffic study, or series of studies, are needed in order to comprehensively address all potential traffic impacts for present, planned, and potential future development. The renovation/new construction of Miami Beach High School and the construction of The Meridian are often brought up as examples of elements that were

not considered when the City was developed. It should be noted that when the traffic studies were discussed, the issues were contentious as the discussion by the residents typically focused on potential street closures, limiting access to and through the neighborhood, traffic circles, and other similar improvements that would significantly hamper the ability to travel through Bayshore. What many residents quickly caught on to, is that to the extent that these elements would hamper "others" from traveling through Bayshore, it would also hamper them from getting to and from the places they go on a regular basis. This led to heated discussions.

Based on the recommendation of the consultant, which considered input on the issue by the Planning and Public Works Departments at the time, the decision was made to not recommend that these traffic studies be pursued through the G.O. Bond process. This was discussed with the community during the CDW process, of which there were three CDWs, and the decision was made to utilize the G.O. dollars to maximize improvements. The general consensus of the City staff and the consultants was that the traffic studies would be costly (which would involve diverting funds from construction to the studies) and were not likely to result in significant changes to the neighborhood. The community consensus was to agree with this position and to proceed with the project without the neighborhood-wide traffic studies. It was noted, however, that some level of study, such as traffic counts, may be necessary to locate the requested traffic calming devices throughout the neighborhood for permitting purposes.

Mr. Lenart recently renewed the discussion with the CIP Office. CIP will continue to provide information and will carefully consider resident requests. Significant change to the current scope of improvements for the Bayshore Neighborhood, or the changing of the present direction to perform neighborhood-wide traffic studies, would require input from the City Commission as a body, including a commitment of resources.

JMG/ptw

Attachment

c: Mayor and Commission

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CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

Walters, Pauline

From: Mihaly Lenart [lenartm@cs.fiu.edu]
Sent: Monday, June 28, 2004 10:10 PM
To: Fwd - Saul Gross
Subject: Re: traffic calming



traffic.pdf (20 KB)

Dear Saul,

today Gary Hunt and I met Luz Maria Ciccica from the Capital Improvement Office to discuss our traffic calming problems. She is the new project manager for the Bayshore Neighborhood and also fresh (unspoiled?) in the City. She promised us full support, but we also need your help badly, as you know better than anyone else, that good intentions are not enough to move the City in a desired direction.

First, we need to find out how much money can we get in addition to the money allocated in the GO-Bond for traffic calming. Second, we need more traffic studies, if possible for the entire neighborhood. So far, we couldn't get even the studies for the Meridian condo-complex and the High School. Third, we need open discussions with the designer and the City BEFORE their decisions are made. She said that the timing is perfect, as they are exactly at the point where we can still influence the project.

I also gave her the attached sketch about the Meridian "lock". This is the same proposal I described to you in my previous e-mail that I try to advance before the other traffic calming measures in the neighborhood. It is already late in the game, as it should have been discussed by the DRB and decided before this project was approved. Thanks, and I'll get in touch with you when I am be back in August.

-Michael-

